The Ministry of Rural Development had sanctioned 7500 MTs of rice to A&N Islands for Tsunami relief under Special Component of Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) in June 2005 for creation of additional wage employment in the Tsunami affected Districts of Union Territory. This quantity has been lifted by the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration. However, with implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in all Districts from April 2008, SGRY is not operational.

Global wheat stocks

819. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that global wheat stocks were down to 107 million metric tonnes in 2007 compared with over 197 million metric tonnes in 2001;

(b) if so, what was India's wheat stock in 2001 and in 2007;

(c) what quantity of wheat was imported to avoid shortage of wheat for our consumers during the last five years; and

(d) what long-term steps have been taken with global dwindling growth in wheat crops, impacting imports quantity-wise and cost-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) As per information received from the F.A.O., the Global wheat stocks at the end of 2007-08 is estimated at 147.5 million tons as against 243.7 million tons during 2000-01.

(b) The wheat stocks in Central Pool as on 1.7.2001 and 1.7.2007 were as under:

(million tons)

1.7.2001	1.7.2007
38.9	12.9

(c) The quantity of wheat imported during last five years is as under:-

(million tons)

Year	Quantity
2003-2004	Nil
2004-2005	Nil
2005-2006	Nil
2006-2007	5.38
2007-2008	1.87

(d) Government has taken the following steps to increase production of wheat in the country and to control rise in prices of wheat:

(i) A Centrally sponsored scheme named National Food Security Mission has been launched in selected districts so as to increase the production of wheat in the

country by 8 million tons by the end of Eleventh Plan. An outlay of about Rs.5000 crores has been approved for this scheme during the Eleventh Plan.

(ii) Under Macro Management Programme in districts other than those covered under the National Food Security Mission, Integrated cereals Development Programme in wheat based cropping systems is in operation.

(iii) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana has been launched with an estimated outlay of Rs.25000 crores during Eleventh Plan period for holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors including foodgrains so as to achieve 4% growth in agricultural sector during Eleventh Plan period.

(iv) Minimum Support Price for wheat has been increased. It was fixed at Rs.1000/- per qtl. for Rabi Marketing Season 2008-09, involving an increase of Rs. 150/- per qtl. Over the MSP fixed for RMS 2007-08.

(v) As short term measures, Government has extended the tie upto 30.4.2009 for the notification issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to enable State Governments to impose stock limits on wheat. Import of wheat on private account has also been permitted at zero duty.

Rise in prices of edible oils

†820. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been steep rise in the prices of edible oils in different parts of the country;

(b) whether Government has taken any measures to check price-rise; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The domestic prices of major edible oils *viz*. Soyabean Oil, Mustard Oil, Groundnut Oil, Sunflower Oil, Cotton Seed Oil, Sesame Oil, Coconut Oil, RBD Palmolein and Rice Bran Oil have decreased by 31%, 12%, 13%, 11%, 30%, 12%, 5%, 35% & 30%, respectively during the last three months.

(b) and (c) Some of the measures taken by Government to contain prices of edible oils are:-

(i) The import duty on Crude and Refined Palm Oil / Palmolein reduced from 20% to Nil and 27.5% to 7.5% respectively *w.e.f.* 1.4.2008.

(ii) The import duty on crude and refined soyabean oil reduced from 40% to Nil and 40% to 7.5% respectively *w.e.f.* 1.4.2008.

(iii) The import duty on crude and refined forms of other edible oils reduced to Nil and 7.5% respectively *w.e.f.* 1.4.2008. Import duty on hydrogenated vegetable oils also reduced to 7.5%.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.